

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 AGR-05 CIAE-00

COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

CIEP-01 FRB-03 OMB-01 L-02 /059 W

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R 161351Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9911

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, CS

SUBJECT: FAO BANANA MEETING IN IVORY COAST

1. FRANCISCO CORDERO G., ADVISOR TO MINISTER OF ECONOMY ON BANANA MATTERS, AND EDGAR QUIROS G., PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL BANANA ASSOCIATION (QUASI GOVERNMENTAL PRODUCTION AND MARKETING BOARD FOR SMALL INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS), CALLED ON EMBASSY TODAY FOR PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING MEETING OF FAO INTER-GOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON BANANAS IN IVORY COAST APRIL 29 - MAY 3. THEY SAID AGENDA ALSO CALLS FOR EXPORTERS' MEETING APRIL 21-26 AND STATISTICS MEETING APRIL 28.

2. THEY WERE INTERESTED IN (A) USG IDEAS ON TO BE DISCUSSED INTERNATIONAL BANANA AGREEMENT, (B) COMPOSITION OF U.S. DELEGATION, AND (C) MAKING SEVERAL POINTS OF THEIR OWN ON U.S. BANANA POLICIES.

3. EMBASSY OFFICERS RESPONDED THAT EMBASSY HAD VERY LITTLE INFORMATION ON UPCOMING MEETING AND WAS NOT AWARE THAT POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL BANANA AGREEMENT WAS TO BE DISCUSSED AND INQUIRED AS TO NATURE OF PROPOSED AGREEMENT.

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MENT. CORDERO AND QUIROS SAID THAT PURPOSE OF AGREEMENT

WOULD BE TO REGULATE "OVERFLOW" OF SALES TO U.S. MARKET. THEY SEEMED TO INDICATE THAT PURPOSE WAS NOT NECESSARILY QUOTAS, BUT STILL A CONTROL OF EXPORT LEVELS. THEY MENTIONED A TARGET OF SALES OF TWO MILLION BOXES PER DAY TO U.S. MARKET. EMBASSY OFFICERS MENTIONED SENSITIVITY IN U.S. TO TALKS ABOUT CARTELS AND ARTIFICIALLY RAISING OF PRICES. THE TWO SEEM TO BE AWARE OF THIS AND AT LEAST FROM THEIR STANDPOINT, INDICATED THAT BANANA PRODUCERS HAVE NOW PASSED OVER IDEA OF CARTEL-LIKE CONTROL OF PRICES.

4. EMBASSY OBSERVED THAT U.S. POLICY GENERALLY FAVORS COMMODITY AGREEMENTS INVOLVING PRODUCERS AND CONSUMER, ALTHOUGH EMBOFFS WERE NOT AWARE OF ANY U.S. POSITION ON A BANANA AGREEMENT, AND BELIEVED THAT NO SUCH QUESTION HAD BEEN PUT TO WASHINGTON. EMBOFFS ASKED QUESTIONS THAT TENDED TO REFLECT SKEPTICISM ABOUT WORKABILITY OF A BANANA AGREEMENT.

5. CORDERO AND QUIROS WERE VERY INTERESTED IN COMPOSITION OF U.S. DELEGATION INDICATING THEIR HOPE THAT DELEGATION WOULD HAVE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS, AND WOULD INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF "TRANSNATIONAL COMPANIES". ON LATTER POINT, THEY INDICATED THAT SINCE HONDURAN SCANDAL, A FEELING MIGHT HAVE DEVELOPED LOAT BANANA COMPANY REPS SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED. HOWEVER, THEY SAW VALUE IN HAVING THEM PRESENT AS OBSERVERS. THEY STRESSED THAT THEY WERE MAKING THESE POINTS IN HOPES OF A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE AND HOPED THAT EMBASSY AND USG WOULD GIVE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION TO THEIR IDEA OF A GLOBAL BANANA AGREEMENT.

6. THEY INDICATED THAT THEY SEE THIS CONFERENCE AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR USG AND "TRANSNATIONALAS" TO DEMONSTRATE IF THEIR IS INDEED A NEW ATTITUDE TOWARD OR "NEW DIALOGUE" WITH LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: IVORY COAST, MEETING AGENDA, POLICIES, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, BANANAS, MEETING DELEGATIONS, EXPORTERS, TRADE AGREEMENTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANJO01521
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750133-0872
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750446/aaaabqhz.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <11 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FAO BANANA MEETING IN IVORY COAST
TAGS: ETRD, CS, US, FAO, (CORDERO G, FRANCISCO), (QUIROS G, EDGAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006